



**BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, December 15, 2020**

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Georgia Hanigan, Commissioner, Payette County – (present via Zoom)  
Nate Marvin, Commissioner, Washington County - (present via Zoom)  
Tom Dale, Commissioner, Canyon County – present  
Kelly Aberasturi, Commissioner, Owyhee County – present  
Viki Purdy, Commissioner, Adams County – present  
Sam Summers, MD, Physician Representative – present  
Bryan Elliott, Commissioner, Gem County - present

**STAFF MEMBERS:**

Nikki Zogg

Via Zoom: Doug Doney, Troy Cunningham, Clay Roscoe, Ashley Anderson, Rachel Pollreis, Carol Julius, Jaime Aanensen, Katrina Williams

**GUESTS:** Four members of the public attending in person; Guests viewing live stream via SWDH YouTube page.

Guests Via Zoom: Guests viewing live stream via SWDH YouTube page.

**CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

Chairman Elliott called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Kelly Aberasturi – present; Dr. Summers - present; Chairman Elliott – present; Commissioner Dale – present; Commissioner Hanigan – present via Zoom; Commissioner Marvin – present via; Commissioner Purdy – present

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Board members reviewed the agenda. No changes were noted.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Dale moved to approve the agenda as presented. Dr. Summers seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carries.

**APPROVE NOVEMBER 17, 2020 BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING MINUTES**

Board members reviewed the November 17, 2020 Board of Health meeting minutes. No changes were noted.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Marvin moved to approve the agenda as presented. Dr. Summers seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carries.

**BOARD CHAIRMAN COMMENTS**

Chairman Elliott read a statement regarding open meeting law compliance and Board meeting format changes.

## **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Dr. Summers discussed the Southwest District Health mission – to promote the health and wellness of those who live, work, and play in Southwest Idaho. He shared some statistics from other states, discussed our agency's role in encouraging public safety, and asked board members to consider improving our region's health and protecting public safety by implementing a mask mandate for the region.

Following a brief discussion among board members, Chairman Elliott noted no need for a special meeting to entertain a mask mandate. At this time, Board members, with the exception of Dr. Summers, do not support implementing a mask mandate for the six-county region Southwest District Health serves.

## **COVID-19 SITUATION UPDATE**

Jaime Aanensen, COVID-19 Incident Commander, updated Board members on the continued efforts to operationalize the agency's COVID-19 response and recruit a program manager to oversee this response. One of the biggest challenges continues to be keeping up with the workload associated with the response and recruiting registered nurses, bilingual staff, and licensed practical nurses. We have also encountered office space challenges and are implementing hybrid schedules balancing remote work and in-office work.

Thirteen Idaho National Guard members are working with us to help operationalize the response. Saturday testing is now available and the testing schedule is consistently full. A full-time COVID-19 public information officer is now working on education to the public and media outreach.

As a result of being in this response since March 15, 2020, we are continually faced with employee fatigue. Staff assisting in the COVID-19 response activities face increased demand to complete regular job duties and also engage in the COVID-19 response. Like many employers, we have experienced employee illness due to COVID-19 exposure and employee health staff are stretched to respond to employee health.

## **COVID-19 VACCINE PLAN UPDATE**

Ricky Bowman, Public Health Preparedness and Response Program Manager, provided an update on the efforts to distribute COVID-19 vaccine. Our agency expects to receive about 2,000 doses and those will be allocated to the Tier 1A group which includes hospital workers, front line health care staff providing care, and long term care facility staff and residents. The main focus within the internal planning team is getting the vaccine to individuals and providers so there is no waste or excess. The Pfizer vaccine has special storage and handling components that require more detailed planning to coordinate the logistics of managing that vaccine inventory. Ricky explained that constant communication with healthcare partners is in place to work through distribution plans.

The majority of all of our healthcare providers are enrolled through the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW) plan which allows them to store and administer the vaccine if they meet those requirements.

Commissioner Dale asked for clarification regarding the availability date of the vaccine for the general population. Ricky indicated that based on the current priority list the general population can likely expect to see availability early summer. Availability date for the vaccine is dependent upon the supply of vaccine the health district continues to receive.

Dr. Roscoe discussed differences in temperature storage requirements for the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines, and explained that these differences equate to less logistical challenges with the Moderna vaccine. Southwest District Health staff continue to work closely with the state regarding enrollment of the national pharmacy program. That pharmacy program is a federal partnership with Walgreens and CVS to provide long-term care residents and staff vaccinations on site. Our staff will be working with those pharmacies to understand where those vaccines are going out. Several long-term care facilities have not

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enrolled in that program and SWDH will work with them independently to facilitate vaccine administration.

### **SWDH COVID-19 HEALTH ALERT LEVEL UPDATE**

Rachel Pollreis, Data Analyst, Sr. briefly summarized the health alert level changes. Currently, positivity rate is about 20% throughout our district. Ideally, those would be at 5% or lower. Exposures are mostly linked to household and workplace exposure which is to be expected. Thirty cases reported exposure from Thanksgiving gatherings this year. Rachel expects that this is under reported due to people not responding to case investigators.

The number of COVID-related deaths seen throughout November represents a slight increase. Sometimes death reporting is delayed by a week or two to ensure that COVID-19 was a leading cause of death and confirm receipt of death confirmation. November 2020 was the deadliest month for our district. Average age of those deaths was about 81 years old. Rachel explained that data also show a much smaller percentage of those individuals had pre-existing conditions.

Dr. Roscoe provided some information about the positivity rate including that one of the challenges in Idaho, like many places in the United States, is a lack of widely available and accessible testing. This inaccessibility affects positivity rate. He is in weekly conversations with Primary Health with their CEO and Chief Medical Officer. They have seen a slight decrease in test demand with a very high positivity rate of about 27%. When broken down by county, the test positivity rate is much higher in Canyon County at 35% based on tests performed by Primary Health.

Southwest District Health is also providing testing using a rapid antigen test called Binax NOW to a group of primarily teachers, essential staff, first responders, and employee cadres who notice symptoms and are motivated to get tested.

**MOTION TO APPROVE:** Commissioner Dale moved to approve the continued use of the SWDH COVID-19 Health Alert Level system as implemented. Dr. Summers seconded the motion. One opposed. Motion passes.

### **INTRODUCTION OF NEW EMPLOYEES**

Division administrators introduced new employees.

### **NOVEMBER 2020 EXPENDITURE AND REVENUE REPORT**

Troy Cunningham presented the Expenditure and Revenue Report for November 2020. Troy pointed out that fund balances from the beginning of the fiscal year have increased by about \$500,000 and explained that this represents monies received for COVID-19 response early on in the latter part of Fiscal Year 20 that we received reimbursement for in Fiscal Year 2021.

Board members asked questions regarding the continued COVID-19 response efforts and the impact on the agency's budget. Nikki explained she anticipates that response efforts will eventually shift to being absorbed like any other program our staff work on. Some of the federal subgrant funding sources being received through IDHW are broad in allowing investigative activities. Other subgrants help support testing, particularly for schools and other priority groups as well as vaccination efforts.

### **APPROVAL OF 2021 BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING SCHEDULE**

Board members reviewed the proposed 2021 Board of Health meeting schedule and public meeting notice. Commissioner Purdy asked that the winter hours be extended to March 2021 as well.

Board members asked that winter hours for November and March be in effect as well.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Purdy made a motion to approve the meeting notice with the change to the March meeting time.

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### **CLINIC OPERATIONS UPDATE**

Carol Julius, Clinic Services Division Administrator, provided an update on clinic staffing. Services within the Marsing School District will be available the first part of January. Two new nurse practitioners accepted part-time job offers to work 8-12 hours per week.

Dr. Roscoe explained that wastewater analysis in school settings is underway and will include some wastewater analysis testing for a school in District 3 as well. Sample collection has started. This will continue for about three months with a goal of determining if wastewater analysis is a useful way for monitoring COVID-19 within school populations. More information and updates will be available at future meetings.

In response to a question from Commissioner Purdy about who pays for the wastewater analysis testing, Dr. Roscoe explained that the testing is being covered by federal subgrant funds.

In response to questions regarding long-term usefulness for wastewater analysis information, Dr. Roscoe explained that wastewater analysis is a tool to allow monitoring of the level of virus within a population. The monitoring allows detection early of presence of COVID-19 coming from a population and helps inform public health decisions.

### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

#### **Audit Update**

The audit being conducted by Zwygart, John and Associates should be concluded soon and the report is on target to be received by the end of the calendar year. The Legislative Services Office (LSO) has asked for a copy of that before the end of the calendar year.

#### **Budget Revision**

Troy and Nikki mentioned previously to Board members that there may be a potential need to do a budget revision due to COVID-19. After further review a revision will not be needed. However, they expect to come back to request additional spending authority due to additional subgrants being received.

This item can be added to the agenda for next month.

#### **CEC Plan**

The Change in Employee Compensation Plan is the document published by Department of Human Resources (DHR) and Nikki shared the report's recommendations with Board members. These numbers are often used as a starting point for review of employee pay and benefits. For this coming fiscal year, DHR recommends to the Governor a 2% increase in the salary structure as well as continuing with job classifications currently on payline exceptions to help increase recruitment and retention issues.

There is also a recommendation for the benefit package and percentage of contributions for employee benefits to remain the same. This can be discussed at future meetings as well.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 12:40 p.m. Commissioner Dale made a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to Idaho Statute 74-206 (f). Dr. Summers seconded the motion. Roll call taken; all in favor of going into executive session.

Board members came out of executive session at 1:02 p.m. No decisions were made.

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Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nikole Zogg".

Nikole Zogg  
Secretary to the Board

Approved as written:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bryan Elliott".

Bryan Elliott  
Chairman

Dated: January 26, 2021